



Center for Responsible Travel

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PRESS RELEASE

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CREST Announces New Board Officer, Staff Changes

CREST is pleased to announce that Michael (Mike) Robbins has been unanimously elected as the Chair of CREST's Board of Directors. Mike is founding partner of The Travel Company in Toronto, Canada and has over 30 years of experience as a tourism consultant in Canada and dozens of other countries around the world. He has a particular interest in tourism as a form of economic empowerment for indigenous peoples and has worked on a wide range of assignments with First Nation, Inuit, and Maori entrepreneurs. For his work with the Inuit community of Arviat in Nunavut, Mike was named one of the [Top 10 Canadian social change innovators](#) for 2012 by Tides Canada.

Mike replaces Robert (Bob) Breech, who has moved from Chair to Vice Chair of the CREST Board. Bob served as Chair for two years and has been an active Board member since CREST's inception. During his long career as a television producer with David E. Kelley Productions, Bob won seven Emmy Awards for his work on such popular television shows as "L.A. Law" and "Pickett Fences." He holds a B.A. from Stanford University, a law degree from Loyola University and a Master in Fine Arts from University of Southern California.

Finally, CREST has named Mary-Elizabeth (Muffin) Gifford as the Chair of CREST's Board Development Committee. A spa industry expert, Mary-Elizabeth specializes in the green side of the beauty and skin care business. She graduated with honors from Brown University and did post-graduate work at Harvard University's Neiman Foundation of Journalism.

As officers, Mike, Bob, and Muffin serve on the Board's Executive Committee, along with Dan Martin, who is Treasurer of the CREST Board. CREST thanks Bob Breech for his strong and dedicated leadership, and welcomes Mike Robbins as the new Chair of the Board.

In terms of its staff, CREST bids farewell to Catherine Ardagh, who has served ably as CREST's Program Associate in Washington, DC for the past two years. Catherine heads off to Central America to pursue a position with G Adventures. We are glad that she will remain connected to the world of sustainable travel both through her new position as a guide and via email, cath.ardagh@gmail.com. Catherine's replacement, Kehan DeSousa, graduated with honors from Oberlin College and has lived and worked abroad for many years. Claire Menke, the Program Associate in CREST's Stanford University office, graduated with honors in Anthropology from Stanford University, after which she received an M.S. from Stanford's Earth Systems program.